



In the Claims

Please cancel claims 1-4, 7, 24-30 and amend claims 5 and 8 as follows:

Claims 1-4 Canceled

5. (Currently Amended) A composite wheel assembly comprising:

a wheel having an outboard surface thereon, said wheel further having a disc portion and a rim portion circumscribing said disc portion, said rim portion terminating in a rim flange having a flange lip at an axially outermost portion thereof; said rim flange further having a radially inner surface; and a radially outer surface substantially opposite said radially inner surface, said flange lip connecting said radially inner and outer surfaces;

a trim ring mounted to said wheel, said trim ring having a flange portion covering at least a portion of said outboard surface of said wheel, and a U-shaped portion extending from said flange portion, said U-shaped portion having a radially outer wall covering at least a portion of said radially outer surface of said rim flange of said wheel, said U-shaped portion further having a radially inner wall covering said radially inner surface of said rim flange of said wheel, said U-shaped portion further having a lip portion extending from said radially outer wall to said radially inner wall of said trim ring whereby said trim ring covers at least a portion of said outboard surface and said rim flange to create a visible impression that said trim ring is an integral portion of said outboard surface of said wheel and not a separately attached component;

a cladding secured to at least a portion of said outboard surface of said wheel, said cladding having a radially outermost periphery; and
an annular detent provided in said disc of said wheel; and

a plurality of protuberances extending axially inwardly from said inboard surface of said cladding, each of said plurality of protuberances resiliently engaging said annular detent of said disc of said wheel so as to secure said cladding to said outboard surface of said wheel, said plurality of protuberances causing said cladding to be centrally located with respect to said rim flange of said wheel and spaced from said outboard surface of said wheel so as to define at least one gap therebetween.~~means for securing said trim ring to said wheel;~~

~~means for securing said cladding to said wheel;~~

said trim ring and said cladding being in an overlapping relationship in a radial direction wherein said flange portion of said trim ring and said radially outer periphery of said cladding overlap.

6. (Original) The composite wheel assembly as claimed in claim 5, wherein said means for securing said trim ring to said wheel comprises an adhesive deposited between said trim ring and said wheel.

7. Canceled.

8. (Currently amended) The composite wheel assembly as claimed in claim, [7] 5 ~~wherein said means for securing said cladding to said wheel further comprises~~ further comprising an adhesive deposited between said cladding and said wheel.

9. (Previously Amended) The composite wheel assembly as claimed in claim 5, wherein said means for securing said trim ring to said wheel further

comprises an interlocking portion on said rim flange of said wheel and a complementary interlocking portion on said trim ring.

10. (Previously Amended) The composite wheel assembly as claimed in claim 9, wherein said interlocking portion of said trim ring comprises an annular hem formed in said radially outer wall of said U-shaped portion of said trim ring and said interlocking portion of said rim flange of said wheel comprises an annular groove in said radially outer surface of said rim flange, whereby said annular hem engages said annular groove for securing said trim ring to said wheel.

11. (Previously Amended) The composite wheel assembly as claimed in claim 9, wherein said interlocking portion of said trim ring comprises an annular bead in said radially outer wall of said U-shaped portion of said trim ring and said interlocking portion of said rim flange of said wheel comprises an annular groove in said radially outer surface of said rim flange, whereby said annular bead engages said annular groove for securing said trim ring to said wheel.

12. (Previously Amended) The composite wheel assembly as claimed in claim 9, wherein said interlocking portion of said trim ring comprises a hem portion in said radially outer wall of said U-shaped portion of said trim ring, and said interlocking portion of said rim flange of said wheel comprises a tapered portion of said radially outer surface, said tapered portion being configured to slope in a radially inwardly and axially inboard direction whereby said hem portion of said trim ring grippingly engages said tapered portion of said rim flange of said wheel.

13. (Previously Amended) The composite wheel assembly as claimed in claim 5, wherein said radially outer surface of said rim flange is beveled to slope in a radially inwardly and axially outboard direction.

14. (Previously Amended) The composite wheel assembly as claimed in claim 5, wherein said radially outer surface of said rim flange has a shoulder portion and is beveled to slope in a radially inwardly and axially outboard direction from said shoulder portion.

15. (Previously Amended) The composite wheel assembly as claimed in claim 5, wherein said radially outer wall of said U-shaped portion of said trim ring has a wheel weight bead for retaining a wheel weight thereto.

16. (Original) The composite wheel assembly as claimed in claim 5, wherein at least a portion of said cladding overlaps at least a portion of said trim ring.

17. (Original) The composite wheel assembly as claimed in claim 5, wherein at least a portion of said trim ring overlaps at least a portion of said cladding.

18. (Previously Amended) The composite wheel assembly as claimed in claim 17, wherein said at least a portion of said trim ring has a radial projection that overlaps said at least a portion of said cladding.

19. (Previously Amended) The composite wheel assembly as claimed in claim 18, wherein said radially inner wall of said U-shaped portion of said trim ring terminates in an axially extending tab portion.

20. (Previously Amended) The composite wheel assembly as claimed in claim 17, wherein said cladding has an annular groove and said trim ring has a complementary annular projection adapted to interlock with said annular groove.

21. (Previously Amended) The composite wheel assembly as claimed in claim 5, wherein one of said trim ring and said cladding is surface treated and the other of said trim ring and said cladding is painted so as to provide a two-tone appearance to said wheel.

22. (Original) The composite wheel assembly as claimed in claim 5, wherein said trim ring is composed of stainless steel and said cladding is composed of plastic.

23. (Original) The composite wheel assembly as claimed in claim 5, wherein said trim ring is composed of an aluminum alloy and said cladding is composed of plastic.

Claims 24-30 Canceled.